

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 8-10, 16 and 17 have been amended, claims 2 and 11-15 are canceled and new claims 18-20 added. Accordingly, claims 1, 3-10 and 16-20 remain pending for consideration.

There is an objection to the drawings and Abstract. Fig. 1 has been replaced by the replacement sheet attached hereto. In addition, the specification has been amended so that it is consistent with the drawings. The Abstract has been amended as well. No new matter was added by these amendments. Removal of the objection to the drawings and Abstract is earnestly solicited.

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claim 10 has been amended and is believed to fully comply with the requirements under Section 112. Withdrawal of the rejection to claim 10 and allowance of this claim is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2-7 and 9. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable claim 2, and is in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection to claim 1 be withdrawn and claim 1 allowed.

Claims 3-9 depend from allowable claim 1 and recite features of the invention that further distinguish over the art. Withdrawal of the rejection to claim 8 and allowance of claims 3-9 is earnestly solicited. The method of claim 16 has been amended by replacing "appliance" with -- winch --. Claim 16 is patentable at least because the prior art does not teach or suggest a method of producing an assembly

that includes the step of "retaining each said threaded fastening element in a respective one of said apertures and holding said fastening elements against rotation with respect to . . . [a] winch up to a threshold torque using a respective one of said retaining elements." Claim 17 has been amended in a similar manner as claim 16, and is believed to be patentable at least because it depends from patentable claim 16. Withdraw of the rejections to claims 16 and 17 and allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

New dependent claims 18 and 19 state that the winch is a windlass. Additionally, new claim 20 is directed to an assembly of a sailboat windlass. Support for these claims may be found at page 4, line 25 of the application. Claim 20 is patentable at least because the prior art does not teach or suggest an assembly of a sailboat windlass and one or more screws and one or more lock washers, wherein the sailboat windlass is for attachment to a deck of a sailboat using screws in combination with one or more nuts, and wherein the windlass has one or more mounting apertures, each said screw being retained in a respective one of said apertures and being held against rotation with respect to the windlass up to a threshold torque by a respective one of said lock washers, thereby allowing rotation of said screw at torques higher than the threshold torque. Claims 18 and 19 are patentable over the prior art at least because these claims depend from allowable claims 16 and 1, respectively. For at least this reason, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 18-20.

Should any questions arise in connection with this application or should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference with the undersigned would be helpful in resolving any remaining issues pertaining to this application the undersigned respectfully requests that he be contacted at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached drawing sheet replaces Fig. 1 of the drawings. In the replacement sheet, Fig. 1 was amended as follows:

The reference numeral "16" was changed to "38" in all places and the reference numeral "14" was changed to "36" in all places.